



DEPTH RESEARCH LABORATORIES, INC.
521 EAST 24 STREET, BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11210 • 212 434-9222

REACTIONS TO A PROPOSED NEW 85MM BENSON & HEDGES
AMONG CURRENT BENSON & HEDGES SMOKERS IN DALLAS

Prepared for
Wells, Rich, Greene, Inc.

For
Philip Morris

1002481735

August 28, 1978

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

In mid July and early August several groups were conducted among current smokers of king size brands (in Philadelphia) and current smokers of Benson & Hedges (in Boston) to explore reactions to the introduction of a king size Benson & Hedges.

The Benson & Hedges groups included very few Benson & Hedges Lights smokers, and as a result, two additional groups which were comprised of half lights and half full flavor Benson & Hedges smokers were scheduled. The findings of these groups, which were conducted in Dallas on August 17, are reported herein.

As with the earlier set, these groups explored reactions to the introduction of a king size Benson & Hedges. Specifically, they attempted to investigate whether or not the introduction of a king size Benson & Hedges will "tarnish" the current good image of the brand, and the extent to which current share may drop because of the shift in users to the new size.

1002481736

METHODOLOGY

The groups were constituted as follows:

GROUP I - 10 Women; 7 Lights, 3 Full Flavor; 3 Menthol

GROUP II - 8 Men; 4 Lights, 4 Full Flavor, 4 Menthol

Thus a total of 18 respondents participated in these groups, all of whom represent the broad middle socio-economic class.

Discussion started with respondents reporting their experience with and image of the Benson & Hedges brand, followed by exposure to the proposed product in the form of an ad. Reactions to the idea were elicited both in writing and verbally, and this document reports both kinds of data.

Differences between groups were kept in mind throughout the analysis of this data, and these are reported when they appear to be of significance.

Because group research is qualitative rather than quantitative in nature, it serves to develop rather than prove hypotheses. Although the findings reported here are valid for this sample, they are indicative rather than definitive and should not be generalized to the population at large unless their reliability is checked by further large scale research.

1002481737

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

REACTION TO THE INTRODUCTION OF BENSON & HEDGES KINGS

Although none of the current Benson & Hedges smokers were interested in switching to Benson & Hedges Kings, the reaction to their introduction was generally favorable with most feeling there would be no deleterious effect on the brand's current image.

Since many started smoking the brand specifically because of its longer length, and are quite pleased with it, virtually no personal interest in switching to Kings was mentioned.

The women suggested that "...maybe a man would switch..." or possibly younger smokers who are "more cancer aware". Many perceived that the smaller size would fit better in shirt or jeans pockets or in cigarette cases, but they themselves are used to - and willing to put up with - the inconveniences due to longer length.

Some concern was expressed in the men's group about the possibility of the manufacturer making only the King size and eliminating the current length. Those who had this concern indicated that, should this be the case, they might feel "...that I'm getting gyped..." and would have to re-evaluate and possibly reject the brand. Concern was also expressed about the "hassle" at the point of purchase,

1002481738

requiring the specification of size in addition to "menthol" and/or "Lights" as now required by some participants.

A few of the current Benson & Hedges smokers were not really pleased with the idea of Benson & Hedges introducing a second size; however, no reason emerged to believe that this is other than short term without influence on purchase. In fact, some other Benson & Hedges smokers already thought B&H came in more than one size.

1002481739

AD COMMUNICATION

Two new ads were shown in these groups (see attached) rather than the concept ads which were utilized in the earlier groups. It was apparent that the new ads have some communication problems.

In their initial written as well as verbal comments, more than half of the respondents indicated that the "NEW BENSON & HEDGES 'KINGS'." ad did not communicate a "new size" to them. While for some this was because "Kings" was not recognized and/or identified as a size or length designation, there were other factors present in respondents' pre-disposition as well as in the ad itself. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- some thought that the brand currently comes in more than one size;
- some do not equate "100s" with length;
- some do not understand "mm" to be a length designation;
- many have never heard of "regular" length cigarettes (the word now means "non-menthol");
- while most who recognize "Kings" as a size think it is shorter than the current Benson & Hedges, at least one participant thought it is longer

1002481740

- use of the word "flavor" may have been confusing (e.g. "long on flavor");
- "short" was sometimes perceived to mean "low tar" rather than as a length designation;

"WHEN IT COMES TO FLAVOR WE'RE THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT", shown in second position, was immediately embraced as communicating more clearly. However, this was with the benefit of previous discussion and not "pure" in any sense. Respondents suggested that use of the word "presenting" assists getting the "new entry" message across, and that reversal of the headline and sub-headline made the ad "more logical" and "easier to understand".

Severl commented that the ads suggest a comparison, but only show one size of cigarette ("..they are only showing the 'short of it'.."), and that showing both sizes would accomplish instant communication.

1002481741

After both of these "bare bones" ads were discussed, the concept ad with full copy and utilizing the phrase "...SELL YOU SHORT..." in the headline was exposed. Respondents (again with the benefit of much previous discussion) said that they very clearly understood the message presented in this ad. However, many were very critical of the headline, suggesting that it meant they would be "taken" by the brand and that, although it is clever, it is patronizing and makes them feel uncomfortable.

While these groups cannot be construed to be a copy test in any sense, there may be better communication accomplished by

- an actual size comparison and/or
- more descriptive copy.

1002481742

ATTITUDES TOWARDS BENSON & HEDGES

Study participants are very pleased with their cigarette brand choice. The women especially attribute an "elegant" and a "class" image to Benson & Hedges; they feel they are "glamorous" and that smoking them "sets me apart". And, while the men could not be encouraged to go along with a verbalization of this idea, the attractive "sophisticated" package was praised in both groups. Women think the typical smokers of the brand are women, men that they are men. All agree they cross class lines and are very popular in Dallas; the cigarette machines and supermarkets'always run out....".

The women praise the longer length because "...it looks more feminine..." and "sleek"; both men and women find the longer length easier to handle, put out, "re-light", etc. The size, and the original and clever advertising that communciated the size when introduced, were frequently mentioned as the main reason (s) for starting with the brand; "satisfaction" is the reason for continued usage.

1002481743

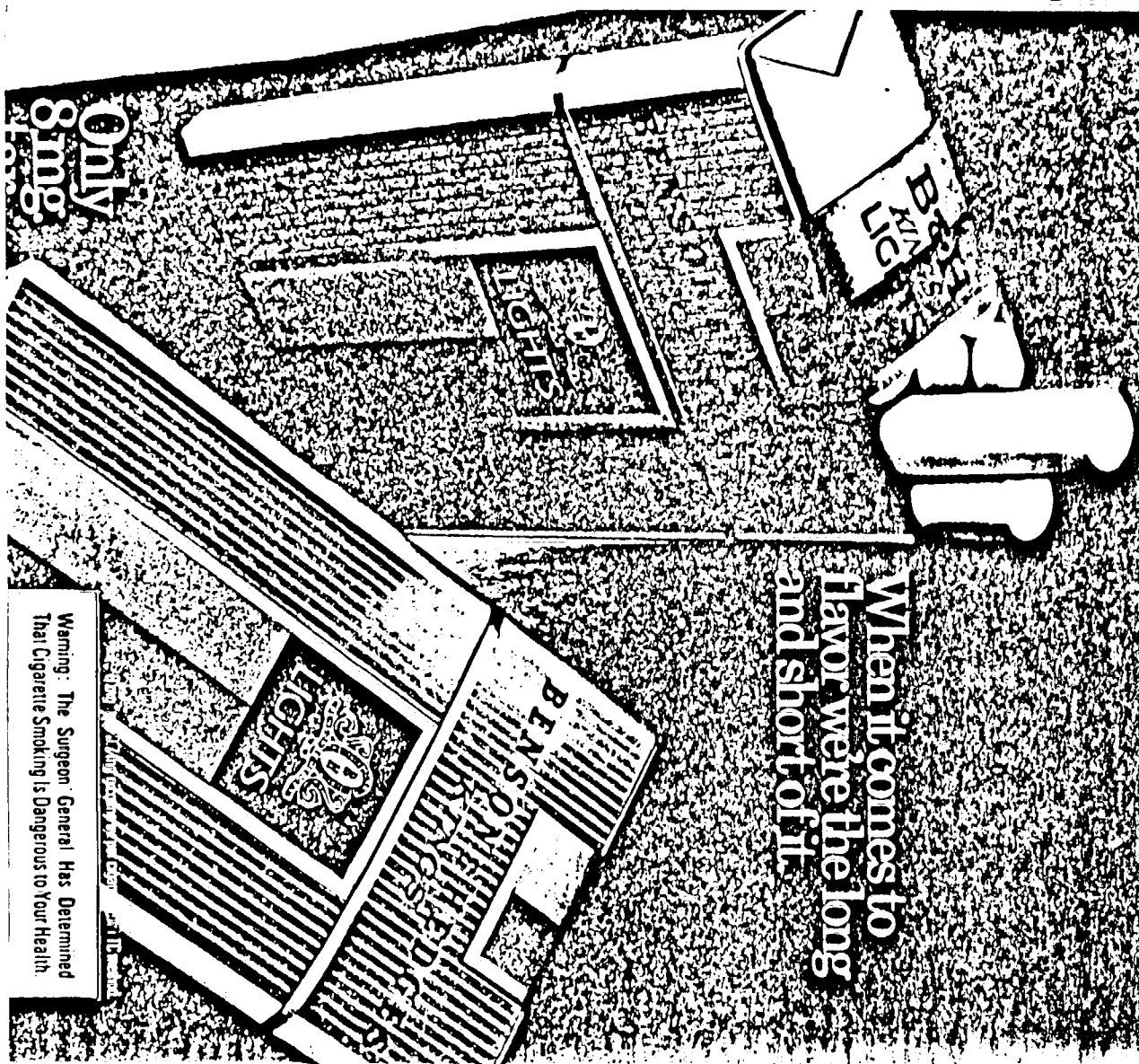
Those who are currently smoking "Lights" do so because "...they are better for you..." than full flavor cigarettes. Although some experience that they actually smoke more Lights, they perceive that they are cutting down and it is an alternative to quitting - which most cannot

accomplish. Lights are less strong than Full Flavor Benson & Hedges, but are judged to have more taste and flavor than other brands of Lights as well as those at the "bottom" of the tar content listing, and they are "...easier to smoke...". Tar and nicotine "numbers" were not volunteered in either group and probing revealed little interest in or knowledge of specifics.

1002481744

NEW BENSON & HEDGES "KINGS"

When it comes to
flavor were the long
and short of it.

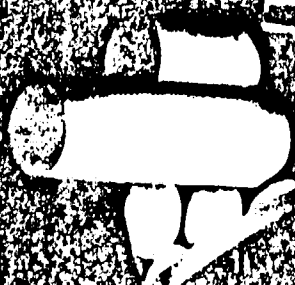


Only
8 mg.
tar

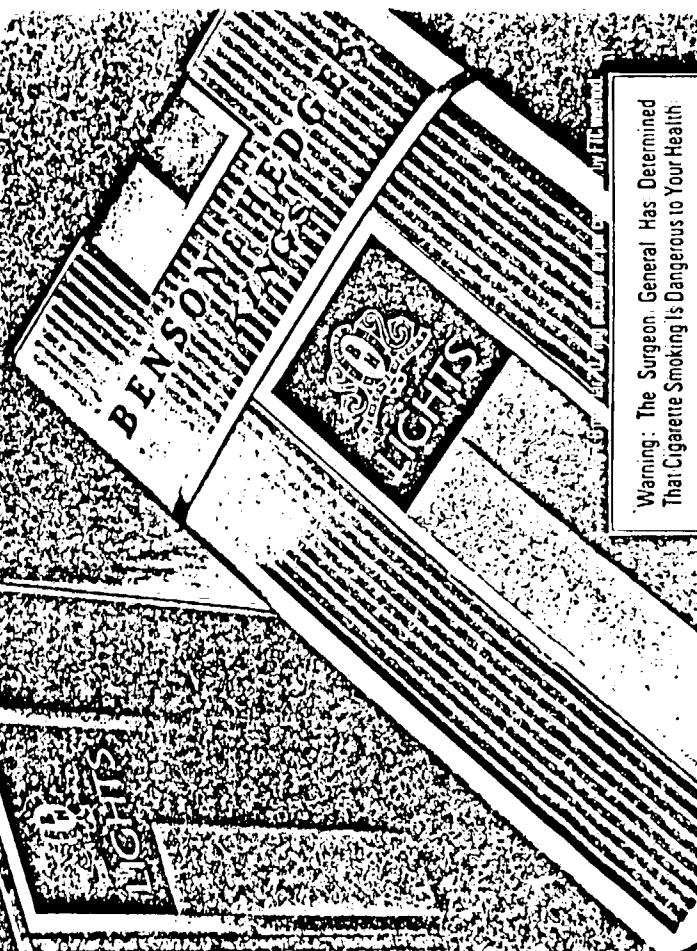
Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

1002481745

**WHEN IT COMES TO FLAVOR
WE'RE THE LONG AND SHORT
OF IT.**



Presenting new
**Benson & Hedges
"Kings."**



**Only
8mg.**

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health

1002481746